THE

MORNING WATCH:

A Narrative.

Say to them that are of a fearful heart
Be strong, fear not.
ISAIAH.

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TO

THE MEMORY

OF ONE

WHO LIVETH THE LIFE IMMORTAL

IN THAT BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY

WHERE IS NO NIGHT

ON LAND OR SEA.

PREFACE.

And thus spake he:—

It was an hundred years ago:

I tell the tale as it was told to me:

Many are going, and many will go,

But they for evermore pass'd on

An hundred years ago.

Many are going, and many will go,

But whither, oh whither, who shall know?

Part the First.

THE MORNING WATCH.

I.

In silence and sadness, cometh the Night;
In joy and gladness, cometh the Night;
In glory, majesty, and might,
Cometh the Night!

But tell me again: what of the Night?
Has it a look of calm delight?
Are the watchers out? are the winds asleep?
How looks the sky? what saith the deep?

Silently the Night comes on:
The first of the moon and last of the sun
Are blended that they seem but one;

The stars are few that out of the blue
The high and scattering haze look through;
But a small white cloud, its plumes scarce
stirr'd,
Lies afloat below like a white-wing'd bird,
Where up and down from the quiet sea
The lightning playeth noiselessly.
The little white cloud would be at rest,
It hath couched its head and smooth'd its
breast,
But sleepeth not; for aye and ever
And whithersoever,
As willeth the wind, it fain must do,
Falling away like a ship hove-to;
And momently, as it falls away,
The voiceless thought of the busy day
Around its weary head doth play.
Thus of the Night: the stars are few,
The scattering haze it hides the blue;

The sea is murmuring deep, not loud,
The lightning plays with the little white cloud,
And only the voices, gentle and meet
For the ear of the Night will the wind repeat;
For the wind it cometh from there-away,
And only this has the wind to say:
The Night comes silently.

What more of the Night? Has it a power
To shadow forth the changeless hour—
The midnight-hour of a night to some,
Whose morning light shall never come?
What saith the Night?

Silent and voiceless, answering not,
But with a noiseless step, like one
Whose eye thou durst not look upon,
Oh! fearfully the Night comes on!

For out of the darkness and the gloom
Shall come to thee in thy lonely room,
The secret thought and vision of dread:
And forms of the living, with looks of the dead,
Shall rise about thy desolate bed;
And fearful words be whispered there
Of a Night whose endless watches are
Ever in darkness and despair;
And ever changing, ever the same,
Remorse, and terror, and guilt, and shame;
Ever the same, the vision of dread,
Ever the same, the face of the dead,
And ever the same, and over all,
Speechless, hopeless, like a pall,
The look of woe unutterable!

Look yet once more, and let thine eye
Soar upward and beyond the sky.

Comes there a morning ever bright,
A morning of Eternal Light!
What of the stars that gem the Night?

Messengers they, come down to say,
That God's bright Heaven lies there-away!
Oh! gently and kindly the Night cometh on;
Like unto one who waiteth upon
The sick and the dying, the weary and sad;
One whose coming shall make thee glad!
For till the morrow the cares that press
And weigh thee down with weariness,
The doubt and fear which are ever near
In a life which is but sad at best;
The wordless grief and fruitless quest,
And trouble and sorrow—*shall be at rest*;
And the beautiful Night shall bring to thee
A promise of that which soon shall be;
The vision of a happier home,

Where care and sorrow shall never come.
For in glory, and power, and wisdom, and might,
Like the presence of God, cometh the Night!

It is enough. It is the home I seek,
Fair as the light upon yon mountain peak.
How sharp the line that cuts it from beneath,
As from a world of shadows and of death!
How calmly, grandly, in his place so high,
The towering headland sits beneath the sky!
Oh, sunlight, playing on the mountain's brow,
Would I were pure as thou!
Oh, mountain-top, with thy one crowning palm,
Would I as thou were calm!
Oh, sunset glory, would I might with thee
Thus, day by day, go bless the rounded world,
Walking upon the Highlands of the earth,

And ever in thy light baptized be ;
And as we linger on each mountain height,
Unto the darkness that we leave below,
The pain and sorrow, weariness and woe,
As gently leave our kind "Good night,
Good night!"

Thus spake the Traveller on the rock so high,
So like a picture on the sky ;
The rock that overhangs the sea ;
When suddenly,
As though some hidden train
Of thought had flashed upon his brain,
He rose, and with uplifted hands, cried he,
"Oh, God! stay Thou the Night!—
Stay thou the rushing Night, or grant me
Power to wing my flight
To travel on with yon bright sun!—
Oh, God! stay thou the Night!"

Will the Night stay for him? and will
The old moon halt upon meridian,
And sunrise in the west roll up the hill,
And tarry, as of old, on *Ascalon?*

Look, how the light upon his face
Reveals through lines of thought and care,
And look expectant, but resigned, the trace
Of something other,—not despair,
But mightier—which, far within,
Down crushing all the might of sin,
Dwells calmly on the struggle there!

Will the Night stay? Lo, the sunlight slowly,
But with an even step, rounds up the
mountain-top,
Glowing and rapt, as some pure thing and holy,
Bound up and homeward, ere Night's curtain
drop,

Till now is left but one small, rosy spot,
Close to the heavens—and now again—'tis
not!

But in its stead, comes from the hill,
And from the waters, and the stars,
As through dungeon-bars—
In one quick wave,—the gloom—the chill
Of Night—Night—the all-surrounding Night!

And on, on, the Night moves on—
Ever and ever towards the sun:
Westward, ho! the Night doth go,
And the little white cloud is following slow
Westward, ho! the Night doth go,
And the pale white stars are following slow!

Then said that voice which spake with him
before,—

What more, oh, Traveller! would'st thou
with the day?
Its pleasant hours were here—and passed
away.
All things move on—what would'st thou
with the day?

And looking up, he answered not, but said,—

It is enough—the stars will go with me—
My old companions, they are not yet dim!
And the soft wind that comes up from the sea,
The gentle wind and stars will go with me—
With the same silent footfall, we
Will press on to our destiny!

But whither would'st thou go, oh Traveller!
Who hast companions with the far-off stars?

And still he answered not again,
But sinking to the ground, as if in pain,
A sudden and convulsive tremor shook
His old worn limbs, as in a book
The leaves a wind doth play with—then with a look
Not sad, but tempered, as with joy, he said,

It may be that my journey's end is near,
That even now—this night—my travel here—
Whate'er my home may be, beyond this shore,
Amid the untravelled worlds—shall cease and be no more!
No more to rest by whispering tree or stream
In meadow-lawns, for music to my dreams—
No more go up the valley-aisles that lead
To the hill-altars of the *Lord Most High*,

And in the motions of the lone stars read
The path that I must take adown the
western sky.
But the night wears :—thou hast ask'd me why
I love the sunlight better than the Night.

Dost see the two large stars that in the sun's
wake lie,
Where the low tide-wave drifts upon the sky?
Look now they dip and flash,—and now go
down
Each with its troop of happy worlds around;
But sightless in the distance infinite!
Those stars and worlds, thou knowest, will
come again,
And in their place in Heaven bring as bright
And pure a glory, as they wear to-night,—
Look now, far eastward, where above the
plain

The mountain-range lies dark;—Lo! other two
As bright and glorious, with as much to do,
And with a path, in Heaven, fair as they—
Dashing their light broad-cast
Upon their else-dark worlds, roll lightly on their way.
And thus the Heavens are round, and fail not any-where;
But ever, in all time, each in its path of air,
The bright and everlasting stars are there!
Thus heaven-around, or waking, or asleep,
Oh in safe arms we sail the glittering deep;
For since Creation's morn, no blank hath been above,
And we are good friends, all,—and over all is Love!

But listen to the sea-bird coming home

From his long day amid the spray and foam.
Is there no sadness in that sharp shrill cry?
He's coming to his home;—his little ones
are nigh;
And now, if ever, should his joy be great.
Ah! doubtless in his wanderings far and late,
The sea-bird knoweth pain, and weariness,
And cold, and hunger, grief, and love's
distress,
For who shall tell him that his young ones be
All safe as when at morn he left them for
the sea?

But thou hast ask'd me whither I would go,—
If thou would'st hear the history of one,
Whose life—amid the crowd that day by day
press on
The self-same way,—is rare in only this;
That it is seldom pictur'd to the world;

Whose only prayer is peace,—and whose high hope is
In a loftier fame;—then listen now;
And if pure thoughts of prayer, and lifting words
Of praise, have strengthen'd with thee from a boy;
So that thy happy life, like some sweet bird's,
Hath been all rich with music and with joy;—
Thank God,—and mock not me!
And if thus living, safely housed within
The strong church walls, set free from death and sin;
If thou within the golden gates canst look
And read within the Everlasting Book
Thy name there written;
Thank thou the most High God—and judge not me.

And turning Eastward,—his dark eyes
Gleaming like light in tropic skies,
'Twas thus spake he.

II.

There is a small deep sea,
Mountain-surrounded, save where southward through
The cleft-hills you may see far down the blue
Of the outer ocean; likewise the light
Of high, calm riding seas, uplifted like white
Hands in benediction—tropic seas,
Midway the Persian and the Bengalese—
That roll in flush, and warm,
And broad-lunged, as from some late storm;
Some headlong fray, or Ocean-carnival,
Upon the borders equatorial,
Amid the Ocean-Pampas, where all
Life glows full and tense; and from the poles,
Poised equally, the balanced world rolls

Down the deeps, sunward for ever,
Smiting the ether, as a blade the air—
But here, within
The everlasting hills, and from the din
And outward tumult all secure,
A haven found, a rest at last made sure,
And home so quiet by the grassy shore,
The weary seas, far-travelled, sail no more.

Oh, very beautiful is that quiet sea!
Calm as a child on bended knee,
That whether waking or half-sleeping,
Trusts so surely in God's keeping;
Murmuring its great thanks so lowly,
Yet urging its warm love so boldly;
Pausing with the low "Amen,"
To whisper to its God, "Good night!"
As to some friend 'twill see again,
And welcome with the morning light!

Far inland, in the billowy tract
Of mountains crowding to the sky,
Is heard a wondrous cataract,
Loud calling to the outer sea;
Like thunder, when the clouds run high—
In broken speech of pomps and wars,
And of the generations born,
Since first, with all the morning stars,
It shouted at Creation's morn;
As a dreamer tells in his troubled sleep,
Solemnly tells himself, as news,
The strange and wonderful things he does.

Silently, upon the mountains,
Up above the gleaming fountains,
As on the battlements and walls
Of some huge fort, like sentinels,
In their light ranks the white clouds stand,
And in a circle belt the land;

And mostly is the air so still,
You hear but only from the hill
The fountain's leap, and from the sea
The deep tone of its lullaby:
Or the grand movement, deep and hoarse,
Of the Cataract's discourse.

And every day the crimson rise
And silver setting of the sun,
Play up and down the sapphire skies,
Until the golden day is done;
For all between, the air, the sky,
The mountains dim, the sounding sea,
And sentry clouds, dwell peacefully.

But we who lived within that land
Were but as children on a strand,
Whom shells, and grasses, and wild flowers,
Led wandering through the dreamy hours;

And whose so happy life was all made up
Of but one mixture, brimming all the cup;
A wonder—a sweet wonder at all things,
Fresh every morning; as a bird that sings
And newly ever, an unwritten melody;
And, with a guess, which was a prophecy,
A feeling as of joy that everywhere
Flew, like a living thing, through all the
summer air!
Then, of the sun, to know that it was warm,
And of the lightning that it brought the storm,
And of the gold and silver clouds, that they
Had fashions of their own, and pass'd away,—
All this seem'd quite enough, for children at
their play.

Now in those days, one morning glorious,
An old grey man came down the mountain-
side,

And from the lands beyond the seas,
The Headlands of the Earth, where night
broods wide,
And crimson-lighted, as o'er Hebrides,—
Brought down the glad news of a God in
Heaven!
The High and Holy One,
To whom, of old, all majesty was given;
In whom hath been, and is, and shall be ever,
The joy, and glory, of all things for ever!

Then suddenly, but slowly, a most rare
And graspless beauty,—fused thro' all the air—
Folded itself about the rounded world;
Which, ever looking unto *Him* above,
Roll'd in still glories wondering as a child,
And comely like a countenance made fair,
And radiantly beautiful with love!
Then, day by day, the crimson rise,

And silver setting of the sun,
Were as Angels in the Skies,
From that High and Holy One ;
Angels two, who from on high,
Brought down our morning to the sky,
And when its light was dimm'd, and far
In the blue Heaven flashed the star,
The first bright star of the evening,—
Long-lingering above the west,
With faces mute and sad, but peaceful still, and bless'd,
Rais'd slow their fading wings, and bore it to its rest!

Upon the margin of that sea,
Where closely down the grass was green,
And bright with scented blossoms, she
Who was the glory of that scene,
Look'd daily in my eyes, to read

What those two Angels said to me ;
And daily as their flashing feet,
Upon the mountains, far and fleet,
Stepp'd light and free ;
She went down to the water's brim,
And in the first light pale and dim,
Kneeling upon the snowy sands,
With low sweet voice, and clasped hands,
She asked of *Him*,
Who giveth all things unto prayer,
Whose angels ever are at hand
With good gifts from that spirit land—
That as the sunlight, and the air,
And fruit, and flowers, every-where,
Were pure, and fair ;—her life might be,
As fair and pure, continually.
But mostly for her child, prayed she,
That God would care for him alway,
And lead him in His perfect way.

And whatsoever of alloy,
Were mingled in her song of praise,
Or pain, and suffering, and disease,
And waking nights, and weary days;
Still would it be a song of joy,
If a kind Father would protect her boy.
But thou art merciful, she said, and wise,
Oh guide thou all his destinies!
Not this world's fame I ask for him,
Or power, or place, or length of days;
But give him strength, pure thoughts, and praise,
And make his great heart in all things
Constant in giving,—as a fountain flings
Sweet waters momently.
But if the time shall be,
When he no more will hearken unto Thee;
Follow no more thy counsels; and astray,
His feet go down that way,

Which leadeth unto darkness and the grave;
And there be none to save;
And then amid the shoutings and the strife,
And rushing of the wheels of life,
Shadows, terrible and dim,
Fold round him, till he see no more
The beacon on the far-off shore,—
Fold round him, and no angel stay
His quick step down that starless way.
Oh, Father! let me die for him!—
Let him not die!—but in that day,
Oh, let me die for him!

Thus daily on the marbled beach,
The morning and the evening each,
Were hallowéd; and every day
The two fair angels seemed to say,
That strength was in that prayer, which would not pass away.

And often when the cooling east
Grew dark with shadows, and the grey
Of twilight melted into night,
Hushing the noises of the day;
While the great voice of the cataract rang,
Deeper and louder, among the hills:
This song she sang—
An ancient legend handed on
From a distant generation,
Of a bright country—a far away country—
A beautiful country, over the sea!

Have I told you of that happy land,
Far over the hills away—
Far over the seas and mountains,
Where they say it is always day?

Never the night shuts in that country,
Or cometh the gloaming grey;

But the day shines on for ever,
In that country far away.

All the golden hours of morning,
Chiming ever the same sweet lay,
Singing of morning, morning only,
In that country far away.

Oh my life is full of joy,
As my heart is full alway ;
But often still I'm thinking
Of that country far away.

The night is very beautiful,
But more beautiful the day ;
Oh ! I think that God must live there,
In that country far away.

Is there sorrow in that land ?
Are there weary hearts, I pray ?

Do they seek for death, I ask you,
In that country far away?

There is no sorrow in that land,
And all weary hearts they say,
Shall find rest, and joy, and peace,
In that country far away.

But unto him came other messengers,
And other voices, now, than her's,
And other white arms gleaming 'neath the firs.
And unto him came sweet tones low,
And hushed as with a weight of wo,
Which they would hide—that weight of wo,
And made a music in his ears,
Which rang through all the coming years.
And they who sang, with faces veil'd
(Half-veil'd faces, that were paled

And wan, with all that weight of wo),
Came gently to him in his dreams,—
Came sitting by the mountain streams,—
Came suddenly (as might arise
A vision from a world below),
With clasping hands and meaning eyes,
With strange light beaming, as from skies,
Whose angels are not God's—whose day
And night have been for ever
Dashed together;
And dashed together, mingle never,
But ever each the other sunders,
And white lightnings, and quick thunders,
Fight the wintry weather!

Thus they gazed upon him, waking
From a vision of their making;
And about him and around him
Twining, with their white arms bound him,

And about him and around him,
With white orange-blossoms crowned him,
And like children, hand in hand,
Eastward o'er the fading strand,
They led him from his father's land.

But ere he reached the utmost range—
The border range of that countrée,
Sloping downward to the sea,
He turned for one last look, before
He passed for ever from that shore,
A land which he might see no more!
The two bright angels in the west,
They had gone up to their rest;
Their sweet faces were not there,
And darkness gathered in the air!

But in their stead,
The white light of a single star,

(Small and dimly burnishéd,
In the mid-heaven buried far)
Came down through the quivering deep,
And wander'd as in sleep!

As to a house of death,
The Night came softly! scarce a breath
Was on the waters,—and so clear,
And still, the cloud-hung atmosphere,
The soft voice, and the under-tone
Of the small sea, and Ocean's moan,
Were music separate, and alone!
But he who look'd upon that scene,
Saw not the buried star in Heaven;
Saw not the wild flowers on the green;
Heard not the music given;
But long he gazed, and fixedly,
Where in the distance seem'd to be,
A figure clad in robes of white,

Upon the margin of the sea.
A figure clad in robes of white
(Looking as an Angel might),
Who folding close each marble hand,
Knelt lowly on the glistening sand,
And with still pale lips rais'd to Heaven,
Look'd up, as to a brighter land!

Long and fixedly, he gazed
Down upon that face uprais'd;
Then turning suddenly,—as one
Who chooses madness,—as a stone,
For one who is an-hunger'd—lone,
(Oh all alone, for God went not)
With only in his Heaven, the light
Of that one star, so pale and deep,—
His quick steps, wandering as in sleep,
Lost! Lost! he fled within the Night!

III.

Into that world wherein the quick and dead
Meet daily, but no word is said;
No greeting, no warm shaking of the hands,
No orders, no commands;
For look you, what is this man now?
What good is he? The chill is on his brow,
And all his heart is still.
Hath he not lived his day?—
Take him away!

Into that world, which whoso entereth
Receives upon his brow the mark of death;
But liveth for a space, and dies not utterly;
Where only of its own are strife,
And all the bitterness of life,

And mocking hopes and sundered friends
(For all that's good God sends),
That world where faith, and truth,
And falsehood, fight for ever, fled the youth.

Not as the dead he entered there,
Shut down beneath the coffin's lid,
And wrapt about in his last shroud;
No train of mourners followed,
Or funeral pomp, or wailings loud,
This world-bound traveller;
No solemn prayers were said:
He was not dead.

Oh, not as the dead he entered there!
Rather like one who everywhere
Stands as a land-mark on the earth;
One of great deeds or noble birth,
Or one who hath broad lands,

And giveth orders and commands;
For open arms and grasping hands
Met and received him there.

Many and swift the years have sped
Since that bright morning when they met,
And down the glittering pathway led
The wanderer from his home.
Oh, fair-haired traveller! well do I
Remember thee and thy bright look,
Child of the mountain-valley,
Mate of the mountain-brook,
For thou and I were one that day.
But now the silver and the grey
Of the swift-rounding years, doth lay
Upon a pale, cold brow:
There is no likeness now.

We had come down from a high land;

(Thou, boy, and I) from a mountain land,
Where faith, and hope, and charity,
Walked daily with us hand-in-hand,
In the hope of immortality.
From thence all downward was the path,
Hanging the mountain's brow around,
And winding as a stair,
Which some huge shaft
Goes darkling down,
To the broad lands of one who hath
The power and the dominion there.
A dim and shadowy land!
A sad and sorrowing land!
For vice and fear, remorse and wrath,
Are the companions there.
Oh! let me not stain my lips to tell
The secrets of that hell.

God knoweth that the heavens are fair,

And all the round world beautiful;
But man without *His Spirit*, where,
Oh Heaven, is the home for him?

Tell me not now of golden skies,
And gardens fair as Paradise;
And hope, and man's high destinies.
This tell me not, for now I see
Beneath a bright and azure sky
In a land that might be Paradise—
A vast and mighty host arise,
Where ranks of armed men amid,
The brazen mouths of war are hid,
And crest, and helm, and tossing plume,
Their quick flash dimly doth illume,
And the met armies of the world
(Bodies and souls of mortal men)
Mingle, and curse, and die! Not yet hath curl'd
The smoke above that place of battle;

But I see
(Oh God, too well)
Famine, and Plague, and Misery!
And other fiends, which scarcely Hell
Will welcome to their place again.
I hear the struggle, and the rattle
Of man's last agony:
And see the clench'd hand grasping there
Hate, and terror, and despair!
Ah! dost thou not hear
A shriek leap through the atmosphere,
A million voices as in one?
Dost thou not hear it out upon
The broad old Heavens, uprising from
A land in bondage, where they cry,
"Help, save us or we die!"
Again, again, that long, wild cry,
"Help, save us or we die."

Oh Christ, who heareth prayer,
When shall theirs be the victory,
The many, and down-trodden; they
Who bear the burden of the day?
Oh cheer and strengthen them, alway,
And let them not despair:
Band them, the millions, all as one
In the great might of unison;
And with them, let thy right arm fight
The Battle of the Right!

Oh Christ, who heareth prayer,
Thou knowest how the whole earth travaileth,
And reeleth, with the shock
Of war, and pestilence, and death!
Even the Heavens seem to mock
At us, as prayers were wasted breath:
Thou seest the dawning on the hill;
When shall be done thy will,

Oh when shall morning come?
This is not home.
Oh let us not despair.

I listen—and a soft voice saith
"Peace—peace: the harvest is not past;
The Summer is not ended yet.
But now behold one cometh,
My servant, whom I send
That there may be one mightier
Than hate, or vengeance, or despair;
The angel's name is *Death*.
Oh is he not fair to see?
Ailing art thou, outcast, and poor?
He will not mock at thee,
Nor do thee harm.
He hath the keys
That shall unlock for thee
Life's mysteries.

Fear not—trust thou his arm.
Scorned of the world,
And outcast,—thou shalt uplifted be
And put on robes of immortality!"

Thou world, that like old Nineveh,
Art slowly buried, day by day:
Whose white sands rolling, death-bells tolling,
Tell of the same sure destiny:
"*Oh, is he not fair to see?*"
Even while thy palace walls are gay
With paint, as for an holiday,
Lowly art thou buried,
And sittest meekly with the dead;
And when the sands have drifted o'er
Thy painted chambers, as before,
Other pale and outworn faces,
Come up, seeking for the places,
Where they may rest and toil no more.

So above thy palaces,
Wherein now no malice is,
Or trouble more, but eyelids closely press'd,
And folded hands, and slumber, and calm rest;
So above thy palaces,
Where all pomp and glory is
(For there must be room,
Always, for the tomb),
Building deep, and broad, and strong,
As for a race that will hold it long;
The ancient, pale-fac'd, outcast race,
They raise their last, still, dwelling-place.

There in marble beds they sleep,
While above, the heavens are deep,
And around, the white sands creep,
And above, the warm winds sweep,
And night-dews weep.
Oh! strong and mighty in that still place,

Each with his cold and ashen face,
Is that ancient, outcast race!

But thou shalt arise, oh world! one day
As by the breath of God! then shalt thou see
The paintings on thy palaces—
All whose beauty and glory is
Only in darkness and decay—
Like mist-lines fade away!

Even as old Nineveh,
In her palmiest day;
Lived I that thrice-accursed life;
'Till now a feeling, as of doom,
Hung everywhere its cloud of gloom,
The herald of a bitter strife;
For of the golden years that pass'd,
Each one less golden than the last,
Was none brought offerings to *Him*

Who ruleth and ordaineth them.
Then the pure sunlight soon became
Cold, sickly, like a thing of shame,
As trembling, pale, and wan it lay,
And could not warm the day.
Even the sweet Heavens themselves grew dim,
And cold, and high, and thunder-riven ;
At times, save only, when on high,
The storm-cloud parted in the sky,
And I saw, all pure and fair,
The same bright, matchless glory there,
In the blue dome of Heaven.
But even as I look'd, the rack
Swept down upon the glittering track,
And I stood again upon
The wide world, starless, and alone.

Not unlike one in dreams surrounded
With strange phantoms of the dead,

Who thanks God, waking suddenly,
With beating heart and gasping breath,
And prays a little time to be
Lifted from that misery;
But sinks powerless again
(For the chain about his brain
Winding, binds its iron train),
And sleeps, and wakes, and sleeps again,
'Till some one brings in *death;*
And death breaks in twain the chain,
And casts loose the iron train,
And now throbs no more the brain,
Yet he shall not wake again.
Too late! too late! too late!
Oh God! he will not wake again!

IV

One morning when the summer pass'd,
The mellow days of autumn came,
And over all the landscape cast
Their pure bright glory, like a flame
Of incense, rising everywhere
In the golden-tinted atmosphere;
I went forth in the glimmering dawn,
Ere yet the early dews were gone,
To the blue hills, which southerly
Break off abruptly in the sea.
Before me was an orchard-lawn,
And down that lawn, with many a crook,
Went by a babbling mountain brook;
And there beneath a broad-arm'd tree
I sat, and made my holiday.

No doubt, an angel 'twas who came,
And gave me breath, and life, and thought,
And led me from that place of shame
So gently, that I knew it not;
Likewise reminding me of all
Sweet fancies, which beneath some thrall
Now rose as to a festival;
And music brought with them, pure air,
And evergreens, and garlands fair,
Cool springs of water, mosses, mountain ices,
And carved shells, and flowers with rare
devices.
There, sitting beneath the broad old tree,
They danced upon the bright green sod,
Old-fashion'd phantoms, strange and odd,
But fresh with all the hues of youth,
And bold-ey'd as the living truth!
And a brave old song they sang to me,
All of the days when they and I

Went wandering under a summer sky,
And chased the shadows, as they sail'd by,
On the shore of a sun-lit sea.

The hours roll'd on: I scarce could say
If it were night, or it were day;
Old faces look'd at me, old prayers
Were murmur'd over, unawares,
Until from out the mountain glen
I heard a loud voice say "*Amen!*"
(I know not if an angel 'twas,
Or some sweet echo wandering there
Saying "Amen" to its own prayer.
But sure I am that once, and again,
A voice cried out "*Amen!*")

Then I arose, and down the lawn,
And through an ancient wood pass'd on,
Until we reach'd the sounding sea.

(The mountain brook went down with me,
And as it went, talk'd even on;)
And nowhere there was discontent,
Or pride, or scorn, or argument;
But all things in that golden weather,
Seem'd only to live and love together!

And sitting in that ancient wood,
I caught the secret of it all:
That all things beautiful, are good;
And all things good, are beautiful!

As in the beauty of a *tree,*
Obedient to the will of God,
Knowing no other will, and free
Of all his gifts—the warm rich sod
About its branching feet—the visiting air;
The travelling clouds in heaven, and its soft
blue;

The mist, the summer showers, the cool night
dew;
The light of stars, and moonlight, and the sun,
And the still lightnings, when the battle 's won;
All things soever, of the fair and good,
It chooseth from the multitude;
Chooseth joyfully and mute,
To mingle with its flower and fruit;
And these it giveth unto *Him;*
All which it hath. Oh! not the Cherubim
Give thanks more welcome, it may be,
Than the sweet offering of this humble tree.

And now the fairest of the day,
Its hours most golden, had passed on.
Over the harbor, over the bay,
On, on, to the westward they
Were following the dawn.

But ere the shadows from the hill
Told of the night, its gloom and chill;
While the warm glory everywhere
Still hovered in the golden air,—
Arose a dim and shadowy train
Of pictures, which within my brain
Had slumbered long; not bright and gay
As those which trooped in with the day,
But sad and tearful. Some were old,
Some joyous faces now grown cold;
Some very sad that now are beautiful,
And bright with light and joy.
One was the picture of a boy
Who had the look of an Immortal,
For his years were few.
Not Heaven's dew
Was purer than that boy.
But in a picture of a later day

A man was there—the angel gone away!
(These all are they which once had life and
breath,
And now are dead not—they but sleep.
Not shadows they,
Or phantoms, which will pass away;
We shall awake with them, when Death
Shall open that long gallery,
Where in bright colors that will last
Doth hang the pictures of the *Past.*)
As each pass'd by, a sad tone rose,
And throbbed and fluttered to its close;
Old-song fragments, and tones low
And rich with echoes of the long ago!

Like the soft haze, that everywhere
Brooded over the summer air,
I saw one sweet-toned picture there,
Mellowing all thought, stilling all care;

It was "*the hush of prayer.*"
I gazed upon it till the sun had set;
I gazed upon it till my eyes were wet,
And my heart throbbed and my reeling brain
Came down in blinding rain.

Then I arose and looked upon the heavens,
And looked upon my life;
And looked upon the object of that life;
And looked upon the hour when life
should cease;
And one was bright with beauty and with light,
And one was calm, and grateful, and at peace;
But this was darkened with a coming Night,
Of fear, and bitterness, and strife,
And fear, and bitterness, and death;
Poisoning the world which first had poisoned it,
And made it but a puff of tainted breath!

I came to my deserted home,
And sitting by the open door,
Beneath the elm-tree and the palm,
I saw the dead leaves rustling o'er
The pathway and the cottage floor;
And shadows down the mountain come
And play upon the grassy shore,
And launch upon the belted sea;
I saw the mountain-summits, calm
And mighty, as in days of yore;
And heard wild voices, fitfully,
Sweet wild voices, which the breeze
Uplifted from the distant seas;
But one sweet voice, on sea, on shore,
I heard not, and shall hear no more!

Then a sad vision came to me;
All in the still and shadowy night,
A figure clad in robes of white

Stood on the margin of the sea:
A figure clad in robes of white,
And looking as an Angel might,
Who folding close each marble hand,
Knelt lowly on the glistening sand;
And with still, pale lips rais'd to Heaven,
Look'd up as to a brighter land!

And from that night there was no peace for me,
In this my home; no peace or rest,
But a great sadness, deep, unspeakable,
Folded itself about me like a mist;
Enshrouding all things, and bedimming all;
So that all glory of the hills, the sun,
And light of breaking waters, was no more;
And in their stead, dim shapes, and mocking eyes,
Went on before me by the sounding shore,
And look'd upon me from the vaulted skies:

And weird, and dream-like, as in some strange
clime,
Amid the darkening hours, the lagging time
Roll'd onward, like a sullen summer's day,
With the low thunder muttering in the sky,
The flashes of its anger momently
Revealing far-off shores of gloom; and over
all, the light
Making a solemn mockery of Night!
So lying by the sea-side, worn and wan, I slept,
And dream'd; and while the rattling sands
crept
Up, and the low song of waters rose and fell,
Like thunder-tones made musical;
My spirit was afar, and pois'd above the deep,
Where all the bright worlds, quiet as in sleep,
Roll'd by in glory,—and from each and all
In a new language, strange, and wonderful,
A sweet low sound

As of a festival, or worship, floated round
And was perpetual.
But as I look'd, lo! suddenly,
Within the sun-illumin'd space, star-strewn,
Monstrous, and formless, as though thrown
From Chaos, and the Everlasting Night—
Which gave not, or receiv'd, but backward
hurl'd
Upon the skies, the music and the light,
Which elsewhere were a wonder and delight;
Its pennants idle, and its sails all furl'd,
Silent, amid rejoicings, sail'd a silent world!

Its light, if such it was, was as the light
Of breaking waters on a midnight sea;
Where ever storm, and darkness, and affright,
Mingle perpetually.

Its sky, low-hung, and starless, such as Night

And coming tempest flash upon the sight;
A darkness beaded, as the sea with foam,
Where slept the lightnings of the wrath to
come!

Upon this silent world there silent stood
A vast and countless multitude;
With downward eyes, and lips of bloodless
white;
And speechless all,—no word of hate, or love,
Or fear, or agony,—no sigh, or moan.
But as from some ponderous bell, sky-hung,
Unseen within the vault above,—
In pauses from its iron tongue,
Fell through the gloom (as 'twere a groan
From all that host) one deep, sad tone,
A single toll; at which all eyes were rais'd,
And lips apart, each look'd a kind of joy,
Something like madness,—but soon again,

As a quick lightning to the brain,
Upon their downward faces, fell
The look of woe unutterable!

A mother and her child met there—
Both were so beautiful and fair,
That, so it seem'd, a milder mood
Pervaded that vast multitude;
But the mother gazed at her speechless child,
And the child look'd up at her silent mother,
One with a look so wan and wild,
And with so blank despair, the other;
And pray'd (Oh God, forgive their sin)
That *Jesus Christ* might die again,
Or some quick madness set them free
From such unnatural misery.
But still they gazed, the child and mother,
And still with look more terrible;
Till, suddenly, each spurn'd the other,

And then for ever on them fell
(Oh, type and counter-sign of Hell)
That look of woe unutterable!

V.

The vision chang'd; the multitude were gone,
And that sad group: and darkness clos'd around.
Then slowly, as at coming of the dawn,
A light came soft and quietly,
And I was looking at an evening sky.
Bright stars were there—some travelling clouds sail'd by,
Seeking a mountain range, not far,
Which inland stood. A low and tremulous jar,
With sounds of falling waters, sounded near,
And o'er a lowland vale a light mist curl'd,
And slept, and here and there
Rock'd gently in the evening air.
I was again within the sounding world!

And looking at these pictures in the air,
Upon the back-ground of the rounded sky,
I knew it was the same old world which I
Had left at sunset, drowsing on the sands;
And knew that it was pure and fair as ever;
But from that dream I woke not utterly;
Woke not, but saw again
The look, the multitude, the clasped hands.
The wordless agony!
I know not if the print is on the brain,
But they were with me, and will be for ever.
Waking, I woke not, but for years
Went up and down the land as one
Who, having pass'd all human fears,
Moves on as in a world alone,
Where there is neither joy nor tears.
And so alike, through forests and the throng
Of crowded cities, and among
All sights and sounds, voiceless and swift

And with a light step, as on air,
I pass'd on like a bark adrift
Upon a shoreless sea: but where
The mountains, as in prayer,
Lift up their heads, and seem to say
Low hallelujahs to the air;
And where the sea, its hosts march'd up the bay,
Shouts all as one, "wonder and praise!"
There wander'd most, and through the summer days
Sat motionless, hearing but one voice;
And bearing, ever, through all place, all time,
The burden of a nameless crime.
And of my own there came nor fear, nor joy;
The wild beasts look'd at me, but harm'd me not,—
Only a beautiful Chamois
Stole up, and timidly, in its sad, wild
Way, gazed within my eyes, as a child

Looks upon a new face at the hearth:
And I and the Chamois were friends at sight.

I had no thought of prayer.
I dared not: but to be,
As by the mountains, and the sea,
And by the lonely cataract, within
An atmosphere of peace, and love,
And, as it were, a kind of supplication;
Pure voices, that acceptably above,
Go up, for ever and for ever;—this to me,
Was as my daily food, my breath, my life,
and free
As was the manna in the wilderness; and
as one,
Within some lofty nave alone,
Breathes in the music of the choir,
And with a still heart, witnesses
The Holy Mysteries;

But dares not raise
His voice, or utter one "Amen,"
Or in the "*Gloria*" swell the hymn of praise;
But kneeling far apart,
All mute, and lone,
Hears only one deep tone;
The music of a prayer unutter'd, at his heart,—
Thought, but not daring speech,
"Christ have mercy upon us,"—
So, by the lone cataract, and upon the hill,
And by the mountains, and the sea,
I heard the everlasting worship, and was still!

At last there came a change: methought that all
The sweet low voices musical,
From falling waters, and the evening breeze
Bound sea-ward o'er the forest trees,
And from the mountain-passes, and the sea,

For ever and for ever, rose for me!
For ever through the still and starry night;
For ever in the sun, and in the light
Of storm, and tempest, and in rocking winds,
Like Angels flying o'er
A land accurs'd, and evermore
Beseeching Heaven, "Spare, oh spare:"
So rose the universal prayer;
Forever and forever rose for me!

And then I wept; and fell upon the sands,
And rose all nerveless, and with clapping hands
Ran plunging in the breakers; and from out
The lifting waves, essayed to shout,
And join the everlasting voice
Which now a new song sang, "rejoice,
Rejoice, oh evermore rejoice!"

Then up the high rocks springing, swift with
joy,
I shouted down my beautiful Chamois.
And all that summer day, upon the hill,
We listen'd the new music and were still!

But as the light waned, and the evening crept
Above the mountains, drawing close apart
My new-born happiness,—as to the heart,
The hand of one we love,—I slept;
Going adown the deeps, as down deep
Waters goes the diver, slower and more slow,
And finding far below,
The equilibrium of a happy sleep.

Waking, 'twas midnight—far beneath me lay
The sleeping waters of the bay:
But from the ocean, as from some emotion,
Never-dying, never-ceasing, with its motion,

Momently, like the ticking of a clock,
Came up the quick, low shock
Of breakers on the beach, and moonlit sands
Forever beckoning to the beckoning sky,
Ran gleaming right and left, as into unknown
lands.
Then looking upward, with a moisten'd eye,
I said, "Oh wonderful, and glorious, and Most
High,
Unto thy name be praise, and adoration,
Glory, and power, and wonder, and all might,
And the first fruits of all pure hearts for ever,
For this great mystery, that thou art Love."

And while the round world, cool within the
night,
And murmuring ever as of pleasant dreams,
Went down to meet the morning—I to my
cottage home,

Went slowly down the dewy mountain side,
And said unto my soul, "Oh woe betide
The ill that henceforth may o'ershadow thee,
Thou soul immortal! A few days yet we roam,
And ever travelling in the self-same round,
And ever seeking what shall not be found,
And ever hasting with the farthest star,
Silently, swiftly, to the judgment-bar!
Oh soul immortal, let us sin no more!
Oh soul immortal, let us no more fear!
But listening to the surges on the shore,
Attune us to the music that is here;
Even the echo of the life to come!
And so, when call'd of God,
We step without these walls of flesh and blood,
It will be going to our natural home;
Not lost, benighted, in a land of storms,
Begirt and heralded with phantom forms;
But light-surrounded, hail with songs of praise,

The sunny climate of our early days;
And find again, more beautiful and fair,
The hopes and visions that have linger'd there.
Oh, hopes gone up: oh, memories laid away:
Unto that day,
Keep bright your robes of immortality!

Then glorified with crimson and with gold,
The ever glad and bounding world rolled
Down the sunrise, that on radiant seas,
Far orient, had flash'd the livelong night,
Where Affghanistan, and the Siamese,
And stranger hulks from famous Astracand,
With barks European, their brows abreast,
Went gaily sunward to a glittering land;
But with them all sail'd neither peace or rest,
Or any forethought of the night to come;
But rather, as all night had pass'd away,
And time itself unrolled in one long golden day.

And even thus, I said unto my soul,
Oh soul immortal, we will sin no more!

Oh morning, golden with the light of love,
When I was lifted, as with angel wings,
When wilt thou dawn again, oh fair to see?
For now a soft voice cometh from above,
And sings,
As 'twere a prophecy,
Of other mornings soon again to be,
In a far country, by a sapphire sea.
Oh, home among the mountains beautiful,
Shall I not look upon thy face once more?
Perchance the measure of my days is full,
And I must onward to that distant shore;
Oh, let me look upon thee once again, ere yet
The long night cometh, when my sun must set.
Hast thou grown old, my home, my beautiful?
Are not the mountains round thee as of yore?

Comes not the morning glorious, as then,
Flushing the valley and the mountain glen?
Behold, I come!
I stand between the highlands and the sea,
Where facing seaward, underneath the hills,
Thou look'st upon the heavens lovingly,
As I look on thee, my home!
I see the mountains with thee as of old,
I hear the fountain-music from the hills;
And all the valley the swift sunlight fills
Brimming and golden!
But as I look, the light grows pale and cold,
The vision changes, and the years roll on.

The vision changes;—the soft day hath gone,
And over the valley and the hill,
The drowsing air is still.
Only a light, low breath there seems to be,
Which is the land-wind going out to sea.

There were two angels in the west,
But they have gone up to their rest;
Their sweet faces are not there,
And darkness gathers in the air.

But now the stars wheel up the heavens,
  Where midway the moon hath gone;
And a pilot-cloud from inland,
  Seaward leads his comrades on.

On, on, how swift, yet lightly,
  While faint-droppeth in the breeze
Sounds, whose murmurs, only nightly,
  Mingle with the drowsing seas.

These are they which from the hill-sides
  Come down mingling in the air,
And are one, yet many, like as
  Rare and mingled perfumes are.

But now the mid-watch cometh quickly,
And the night careering on,
Pauses midway in its journey,
To God-speed the day that's gone.

And the High Archangel writes it,
In that Book before the Throne,
Where is written all the evil,
All the good that we have done.

When all prayer is inspiration,
And all thought is prayer:
And amid the wide creation,
God seems only there.

When the world goes round so slowly,
And the stars come down so near,
Pure witnesses and holy,
Of my agony and fear.

And I turn me from their brightness,
To my lone and darkened room,
Where my sins crowd in before me,
Adding terror to its gloom.

Then when slumber God denies me,
And the Christ who for us died,
These my olden mates stand round me,
By my desolate bed-side.

Then with mocks, and smiles, and dances,
Comes the carnival of sin;
Then my rooms are fill'd with music;
Then the services begin!

While the world goes round so slowly,
And the stars come down so near;
Witnesses so pure and holy,
Of my agony, and fear.

I have barr'd out the beautiful stars;
But I know that they are there,
Glittering,—all the tens of thousands,
In the keen, still air.

They shall not see my old companions;
Not one of the stars shall see;
Not one—not one—think you they know
How dear they have been to me?

How they were all my life, my joy,
In the days of long ago!
They shall not see their now pale faces;
Their cold, cold lips, their looks of woe!

Oh beautiful night, roll on, roll on,
Oh bright stars, onward roll!
But I must stay with this company,
And the spell that is on my soul!

How am I girded about with friends!
Look! the smile, the glance, the glow!
Oh this is kindness all, my comrades?
The ancient kindness;—is it not so?

Beautiful night—roll on, roll on,
Oh bright stars, onward roll!
But I must stay with my company,
And the spell that is on my soul!

So the beautiful night rolls on, in horror,
Seeming palsied on its way;
Till the first white light of morning
Heralds the approaching day.

Then the dead years, rolling backward,
Leave me at that threshold, where
She who was its joy, departed,
And again return'd not there.

Not again, though soon the coming
Of the Spring, bade all rejoice,
Not again, though all the summer,
Came the birds that lov'd her voice.

Oh the many prayers in secret,
Earnest, low-voic'd, sobbing prayer,
When she knew not that I listen'd,
As an Angel held me there!

Listen'd, but with rebel spirit,
And a heart unyielding, strove,
As a demon with an Angel,
With those words of peace and love.

Oh my mother! Oh my childhood!
Oh the days that are no more!
And the years, they bear me onward
Farther, farther from that shore.

And still farther from that other,
In the land where I would be:
Far beyond the purple mountains,
And beyond the gleaming sea!

Where night comes no more for ever,
And a glory is on high,
Not of the moon, nor of the stars,
Nor the sunlight in the sky.

Oh thou Christ, who art that glory,
Check the rolling wheels, that I
May hear once more of pardon,
And of peace, before I die.

Hush! I hear a music coming,
As of voices in the air;
Ah! the flashing, snow-white garments,
And the floating, raven hair!

Lo! the spirit-watchers leave me;
And a Presence, pure and fair,
With a motion, calm, majestic
As an Angel's, enters there.

With the same calm face and lovely,
That bent o'er me when a child;
Oh the look she casts upon me,
So terrible! so mild!

Oh! my mother! Oh my childhood!
Oh the days that are no more!
Oh for wings to bear me with thee,
Onward to that happy shore.

With a finger pointing upward,
And a sweet sad smile upon
Her angel face, that whispers peace;
The bright vision passes on!

But I know that angels guard me;
As a child, I sink to rest:
I will dream of the still waters,
And a home among the blest!

A bright home, apart from others,
Where with those I love, and those
Who have journey'd on before me,
I may worship and repose!

END OF PART FIRST.

Interlude.

Enterlude.

The light is the light of a star or two,
And a thin old moon, which fain would do
What little she can, as hanging low
In the western sky, she moves on slow,
And the night is still. The sky is bare,
Save the little white cloud which tarrieth
there,
Sailing no more. And now more rare,
And pure, and heavenly, seemeth the cloud,
As folding itself in its own white shroud;
Ah! no doubt, when cometh the day,
The little white cloud will go up and away!

Spirit, whatsoever of ill,
Hast thou seen upon the mountains,

Darkening the silver fountains,
Without advent, without warning,
The long night that hath no morning,
As a sleep that hath no waking,
Wrapt in dreams of hush'd affright?
Lo! a home for thee is making
In that everlasting night!
Thou wilt find companions there,
Away—away—come not here.

Part the Second.

Part the Second

I.

I told you of the belted sea
That laps the bases of the hills,
Save in one point, where southerly,
These hills are parted, and a way
Lies open to the outer bay.
An old man on the northern main,
Who deep in the mountains lived, was wont
To come down to the lowland plain,
And sitting by the cottage door,
While down the sky,
Mellow and red, the day was slanting,
The old man would his life recount:
Telling the old times o'er
Cheerily, as one chanting
A song which he hath sung before,

In better days gone by:
Travels and gossip of those better days,
In fabulous and far-off countries,
Blended and softened in the haze
Of distance, and the long, long years
Gone on, never to come again.
A strange old man was he, all smiles and tears,
With, as I think, some madness in his brain,
For his tales were all,
As I have said, wild, fantastic, wonderful.
But now I heard the old man tell
Of a strange country, far away
In the path of the sunset, where, said he,
There is no night, on land or sea!

No night, I said, on land or sea?

Rising, and pointing where the sun
Had gone on down the horizon;

His white hair flowing; his countenance
Lit up as with a prophet's glance;

No night, said he, on land or sea!
No night upon the gleaming land!
No night upon the sapphire sea!—
But continually the Day!

The great sea rocketh gently on the strand,
And the wind comes southerly.
Ships in neighboring seas,
Bear up that way
To make their northings; counting on the breeze,
Southerly always; and the new life there
In that wondrous atmosphere.

Mountains all around it stand,
Guardians of the land;

But the sea,
The sea alone,
Is mistress of her own—
Knoweth no mastery!
And the sea and the land, and the land and the sea,
Are all one country.

Angels are there!
God's angels doubtless,
For they are fair,
And beautiful, no less;
Undoubtedly,
God hath made this colony
From some world of Immortals,
Perchance the Heavens themselves:
For no man liveth who doth understand
The language of that land!

As in soft mornings in high latitudes,
When last night's snow hangs lightly on the
trees,
And all the cedars and the pines are white
With the new glory; and each passing breeze
Sends it drifting through the air,
As fine gold, beautiful and bright;
So in that country, in deep solitudes,
Where is no voice breaking the stillness there,
O'er the soft landscape falls and drifts the light!

There is no sun in all the round blue sky;
But crimson and white clouds, floating not high,
Drop everywhere
The drifting, golden light, down through the
air;
With sometimes on the mountains summer
showers,
Printed with rainbows; and at all hours,

(For always it is morning in that land)
Even as a friend that clingeth unto death,
All things this light visiteth.
Such is the beautiful country
Where is no night, on land or sea!

Thus the old man said,
And suddenly departed.
While I stood rapt and bewilder'd
With this wondrous vision.
Till looking up, I saw that he was gone,
And half-way up the mountains, among the rocks,
I saw his white locks
Gleaming, as he stood gazing there,
Down through the shadowy air;
A moment only, and was lost to sight,
In the long shadows striding up the height.

Then all that long, warm summer night,
I sat beneath the stars, as they went by,
Thinking of that fair country;
And of the life that yet remained to me;
The stars that might yet rise within my sky;
And of the crowding shadows of the past;
Whereof, amid the multitude,
If aught was fair or good,
Seemed it even as a star to beckon me
With its small white hand,
On, on, on, to that bright land!
Oh then came, filling my eyes with tears,
The memory of that sweet old song,
I heard so oft in the long-gone years,
Before the evil days; or ever
That sweet voice was hush'd for ever:
The song that told of this same bright country,
The far away country,
The beautiful country over the sea.

Doubtless, I said, must be such land, for what
Are dreams and visions all, but prophecies?
Oh, happier countries are, and softer skies,
Or why is it we dream, if they are not?
Now, therefore, I will journey for that land,
Through all the years that may remain to me.
Or few, or many, the wide world over I
Will look for that bright sky,
That peaceful strand,
The beautiful country,
Where is no night, on land or sea.
Nor longer I will tarry; but to-morrow,
If that to-morrow come,
I will go forth from this my home,
Which now is home no longer unto me;
Leaving all care, all sorrow!
For whatsoever care shall come to me,
And whatsoever sorrow, with wet eyes
Look up beseechingly;

I will not look at them, nor see them more.
For thenceforth shall I not looking be
Ever to that bright shore —
To the pure skies,
Where is no night, on land or sea!

Thus said I, and a star which long had hung
Motionless, while the rest sailed on,
Like a white line of summer lightning
Ran glittering down the sky,
And stopping suddenly,
Pointed on westward; where,
In the soft blue air,
Low down between two mountain peaks,
Every day the sun sets.
And I thought, 'It is another hand,
Which showeth me,
Where is the beautiful country;
Where is the happier land!'

And now behold the morning,
As never before was morning!
As never before was Night,
Cometh the beautiful light!

And the crimson morn goes up, and on,
Into the azure of the sky,
Where in the stillness of the dawn,
Westerly a cloud sails by;
And from the dawn it taketh away
Crimson, and white, and apple-grey.
Silently, as sails the cloud,
The night-dews rise in wreaths of mist;
The cataract of the mountain, loud
Calls to the hills:—its bright robe gleams
Silver, and gold, and amethyst;
And what like muffled thunder seems
Is the low crumbling crush and roar,
Of breakers on the distant shore.

The air is still;—even as a bell,
All sweet sounds it carrieth well;
But now, as a bell, they seem to say,
All voices near, or far away,
From the distant hills, and mountains grey,
Or the uttermost parts of the rounding sea—
"May God have mercy upon this day!"

Wondering, I looked at the sweet Heaven,
That such a prayer must needs be given,
So bright, I said, and pure, and holy
(If aught that's earthly can be holy)
Doth seem this golden day!
But straightway came the bitter thought,
That 'twas my sin, the prayer had wrought;
The burden of my sin, which lay
Even as a curse upon the day;
A subtle poison, running through
The white mist, and the morning dew,

And like the dust in sunbeams, marring all
That else was pure and beautiful.
Doubtless, I said, the while I breathe the air,
Is need of that strange prayer.
But oh my Father, for this day, I pray thee,
Crush me not utterly!
Oh well I know that I must bear
This burden, all this weary weight;
The life which once hath been;
The ill, the sorrow, and the sin,
Which cannot yet be separate,
Until *Thou* call me hence.—
But now, I go a weary way,
To a far land—seeking a country where
I may yet find some respite from this care.
And this my mountain valley, and the plain,
My childhood's home, I ne'er shall see again!
Oh let me not be a mockery,
To these brute things that know not *Thee;*

But for this day,
Take *Thou* my sin away!

Then I arose, and straightway, lo!
The winding valley and the sea,
And the white mist that curled below,
Were crowned with glory,
As from God's right hand! And I knew
(For how else were the heavens so blue?
The cottage and the landscape all
So radiantly beautiful?)—
I knew it was a sign of peace for me,
That I was heard;—and for my prayer
God had left his blessing there!
So, likewise, all those voices musical
Now seemed to say,—
"God's blessing rest upon this day!"

Then I departed, going westerly;

And down upon the bending horizon,
That runs along an upland range, which high
O'erlooks the country:
I said unto that land my last Good Bye.

Poised overhead, and still as a star,
Was the crimson cloud which had sailed
that far;
Unto that, also, I said Good Bye.
Then all in the stillness of the dawn,
The beautiful morning and I passed on!

II.

The air was still ;—not a cloud on high
Save this, the one bright cloud, which there
Seemed motionless upon the sky,
Resting so calm and quietly
In the soft warm air.
So all in the stillness of the dawn,
The beautiful morning and I passed on ;
Down the valley and through the wood,
Passed on into the solitude.

The sounds of home, the voices which said,
"God's blessing rest upon this day,"
Slowly they were dying away,
Oh, how sadly, dying away.
And never yet have I heard the same

Sweet voices, which that morning came
From my mountain-home ; and never yet
The same bright sky and air have met,
Though oftentimes, in my weariness,
In desert places by the sea,
And far away in the wilderness,
Voices sweet have visited me;
Voices, whose cheering were as wings
Unto my lonely wanderings.

I tarried not, but straightway on,
Down the valley and through the wood,
Passed into that ancient solitude ;
Till up in the mountain-pass I stood,
Where, to the country lying below,
Between these mountains, white with snow,
Is the crimson track of the sun-set.

And now it was high meridian,

And overhead stood the sun.
Down in that country lying below,
Was all that was lovely to look upon;
There saw I, pictured, as in a dream,
The bending curve of the distant hills;
The lowland valley within; and the gleam
  Of the sunlight on the sea!
But the little cloud which so quietly
Stood over the hill where I said Good Bye,—
Behold! as quietly now it stood
  Up in this mountain-solitude,
And in the same spot in the sky!
The bright colors it took from the dawn,
The apple-grey, and the crimson, were gone;
And now it was dazzling white; and radiant
As the face of a saint!
(I know not if a cloud it were,
Or the vision of a cloud in air,
Seeming only to be there;

Or, hid in the shroud of the little white cloud,
Might be those angels two, the same
Who first at morn and evening came,
Only at morn and evening came
But now by day and by night must stay,
Because of the perils of the way !)

How it came up, no one can tell!
No other cloud, and the air so still;
Almost seemed it a miracle;
And that the cloud was going with me,
On to the beautiful country!
Every day to be there?
Always; be it foul or fair!
Every day to be up in the sky!
In storm, and lightning, and blinding rain,
On the desert sands, or the sands of the sea,
Or on the broad wave of the rolling main,
The beautiful cloud to be company!

And behold it was so! come weal or woe,
The little white cloud was to go with me,
And always, by day and by night, must stay,
Because of the perils of the way.

Oh Heaven is kind, to those who trust
In its loving kindness;—we are but dust;
But God who careth for the sparrow,
He bringeth the sun for our to-morrow;
Bringeth it even while it is night;
And whatever weather it bring below,
The summer rain, or the winter's snow,
And however dark it look on high,
It is all bright in the upper sky!

And now, in this high mountain country,
Seeking a rock,
Such as the torrents would not sweep away;
I builded an altar; laying up block upon block,

From loose rock fragments, which around
Lay scatter'd on the ground;
And I builded the wall
Square and pyramidal;
North, south, east, and west,
Four divers ways the altar faced;
Then upon the basement, broad and deep,
That whoso passing by that way
Might read them plainly,
These words I traced:
"Go on, oh traveller, *with the day.*
Tarry not—press on, press on!
Behold this gateway
The mountains through: It shall lead thee
To a beautiful country,
Where is the day continually.
Tarry not—press on! press on!"

Then (seeing I was girt about, with arms

Protecting, safe from all alarms)
While the great sun went down the glowing
west,
And in the cooling east came up the round
full moon,
I tarried all that summer afternoon,
Finding sweet peace and rest:
Sweet peace, calm rest,
Within the shadow of the cloud,
Far from the great world crowd,
Housed from all care, all sorrow;
And with a bright hope gilding my to-morrow,
Finding sweet peace, calm rest,
In the deep sleep of those who know not fear;
The happy sleep of those who wake to see
Around them pleasant company;
And to hear
Sounds of welcome and good cheer!

So all happily passed the day,
This first bright day of the journey;
Waking at last—behold!
Distant, but yet near,
Night was upon us!
Night, starry and cold;
Night, the home of fear;
Whose shadows over the landscape stealing,
As with some fell intent,
Bring to the heart the feeling
Of judgment!
The feeling of judgment and the wrath to come!

Not so to us, the pilot cloud and I;
For now all things were chang'd; and to us
Even the dreaded night was beautiful:
Oh beautiful the night and glorious!
For doth it not bear us nearer to that home,
Whither we journey: nearer that bright sky

In the far away country,
Where is no night, on land or sea?

So through the mountain gateway we
Marched on to that far away country.
And the moonlight play'd in the bending tree,
All night long in the bending tree;
And the whispering wind went hither and yon,
While ever, as those whose aims are one,
With the same footstep, light and free,
The banded stars march'd on!

Like the knights of old, going down to the wars,
I caught the step of the banded stars;
And while the moonlight played in the tree,
All night long in the swaying tree;
And the whispering wind went hither and yon,
With the same grand movement, light and free,
The cloud, and the stars, and I march'd on!

On, on, on,
As into that infinite vista, which ever
Opens and openeth, onward forever,
Unto the morrow which is there.
The morrow, within whose shadow we
Go down to our eternity!
There overtaking it,
There new making it;
Where all shall be one and the same forever;
To-morrow, yesterday, and to-day.

And now a new wonder:
Behold, the night under,
A pathway, like as a thoroughfare,
Printed all over confusedly,
As thousands of thousands had gone by.
The foot of the child in the step of the old;
The print of the timid, the wary, the bold;

And of some who seemed hasting on swiftly, to meet
Some friend, or a home in the distance to greet;
So light was the print of their delicate feet,
Scarce touching the ground, as already were wings
Lifting them on in their journeyings.
And printed and mingled however confusedly,
All moving onward, all pointing on westerly,
And seeking all, doubtless, that far-away country,
Where night cometh never on land or sea!

Then I said to my soul, fear not,—
Fear not; of whatever bereft:
But for the days we travel together,
Oh, let us not turn to the right or the left;
But through all weather,

By day and by night,
Cling to this way.

Behold, the sun! It wandereth not in heaven;
For all things are so ordered in the sky,
In less or larger circles, that no one,
Save HIM WHO only hath dominion,
Can wander from the pathway given,
Unless so wandering,—to die.
For whatso of created things willeth
To die, loving not life, but death;
Having no joy in being; no delight
In the quick pulses of this throbbing breath,
And in the light,
And in the loving glory of all things?
This also, God permitteth;
But henceforth it must be
As a star gone from its pathway;
A thing apart;—left to its own way,

And mastery.
It must go unto its kindred;
And they are dead:
It must lie down beneath God's curse;
It must make its bed
Amid the ashes of the universe!
And this must be its everlasting home;
Where not the morning ever,
Or the day, shall come,
But night, night forever!

III.

One morning early, in the month of May,
I paus'd upon a solitary height,
Which south, and east, and westward, far away
Beneath the rounded circle of the night,
(Through mountain-passes, which as portals were,
Unto the outer amphitheatre,
To other mountain-passes, opening on
That other world, over the horizon ;)
Look'd down on upland valleys, and broad lands,
And rivers winding into distant bays ;
And bays that open'd into broad-arm'd seas ;
While pure and spotless (as in ancient days,

When came the angels down to spots like
these),
All brightly underneath, glisten'd the sands
Of a small lake, which crept the hills between,
As if for rest within that shelter'd scene.
The sky was high, and cold;—only the haze
Of distance, rested on
The far-off horizon.
All else was clear, and bright; like one
Who slept with eyes wide open,
River and valley, glen and mountain-lake,
Seem'd still, and voiceless all; but broad
awake!

As usual, like the friends you count upon,
The Heavens were open, like a starry crown;
The same old ante-diluvians that saw Cain
Slaying his brother at the altar's base,
And founding there the battles of his race;

Who saw the first ship launch'd upon the sea,
And smil'd upon the earth as it was born again,—
The patriarch-companions—the ancient ones, and fair,
And firstlings of all time, they all were there!
Close underneath them, like a drowsing flock,
The snowy mountain-tops look'd closely by,
And glaciers, many-arm'd, were climbing high,
Where table-lands, and platforms of high rock,
And weather'd battlements, look'd down,
As from the ramparts of some old wall'd town:
While nearest to the Heavens, and over all, arose
A pure and spotless coronal of snows.

And seeing all this glory underneath
The broad old Heavens, such as one would say
Should ever make the coming of the day

A song of jubilee and mirth ;
Therefore I said unto the listening earth :

Oh star begirt and beautiful in might ;
That rollest on thy pathway, silently
As points thy rounded shadow down the abyss ;
Widening for ever into outer space ;
An everlasting, ever widening night—
Is there not joy to thee in thy wild race,
That thou art silent ever ? Or is there One,
Ancient of Days,
To whom, with all the stars, thou utterest
praise
And hallelujahs voiceless unto us ?
Oh beautiful in might, and glorious ;
On whose broad bosom, ever, day by day,
The light and darkness alternate for aye,
Hand-lock'd for ever, and shall ever be,
Till on the white sands of that unknown world

Within the portals of eternity,
They, going divers ways, shall part and meet
no more—
Knowest thou the travellers that ride on with
thee
And like those chasing shadows, ever more
Press on to that dim shore?
Thou, rolling on ices, through the light and
shade,
That flash and glitter as with winter stars;
Belted with burning mountains; thy ribs made
All firm with adamant, and iron bars,
Silver, and gold, and gems, and precious stones;
They,
Made of thy common clay,
Bound up in brittle bones!

Knowest thou these people? how they
suddenly

Grow pale beneath the heavens, and are old,
Ere yet the half of all their days is told;
But still press on, with flags and banners, gay
As life itself were but a holiday!
Finding, alas! no rest, no peace, no home,
Till dropping by the way-side, wan and cold,
They strive no more! And therefore, some,
Bearing on stoutly, and with brave pretence,
Though all around is unseen pestilence,
Are looking onward to a life to come.
Of whom yet some go all unwillingly,
As to a sacrifice;—and some, with fear
And trembling, have no true life here;
And some go smiling, as in pleasant dreams;
Which yet are not dreams all, but cloth'd upon,
With truth's most radiant beams.
These look up joyfully from the desert-strand,
Having a *Friend*, they say, who hath pass'd on,
And waiteth for them in a distant land.

Some are gone mad,—and up through dungeon bars
Are winking, and gibbering, at the winking stars;
Some are all wild with joy (which also is
A kind of madness, in a world like this);
And some, with broken hearts, make no essay
To stay their quick flight down the shadowy way,
But lifting wasted hands, ask but to go,
That peradventure, in some other clime,
These lips grown pale, and cheeks all blanch'd with woe,
May smile again as in the olden time!

Oh many-zon'd, and radiant with stars,
Hast thou the ear of Heaven? Has the Most High

Commun'd with thee apart? Look—canst
thou see
. .
Down-wandering beneath a starless sky,
A lone world, founder'd on a silent sea,
Whose unseen currents, ceaselessly,
Are setting swiftly into outer night:
The night of outer Darkness, and Despair!
And see'st thou the crowded voyagers there;
How fixedly they gaze upon that darkening sea,
As on some mystery,
Which yet they must explore, whate'er it be,
Though Death and Hell were standing at
the door!
And see'st thou the few sad watchers there,
Crowding the mast-head, and the o'erhanging
spars,
Looking far out
Upon the waste, and up where once were
stars,

If but for one more gleam,
One gleam of mercy on the rushing stream,
One last look at the sweet Heavens, ere they
Have faded utterly,
And are seen no more!
While the rabble-rout,
The thousands and ten thousands, shout
"Down! Downward forever!"
Nor lift their gaze from off that darkening sea,
Nor ask for any change; but ever
Shout "Downward, down forever!"

And see'st thou, all other worlds above,
And beautiful within the arching blue,
A world, on whose bright banner broad unfurl'd
Is written "Joy," and "Peace," and "Love,"
"*My peace I give to you.*"
A world, whose morrow,
Like to-day, knoweth no sorrow!

And thou, Oh Earth, from whose fair bosom
curls
The white mist, climbing to a purer air,
And in whose lowest depths, hovers, and
sinks, the breath
Of pestilence, and death,—
Oh! *art thou peopling those wide-sunder'd*
worlds?
The one with glory, and the one despair!
Thou round Earth,—speak to us!
We listen for thy words.

Then instantly a round, rich voice, and clear,
And sonorous, as a clarion,
Rang in the frosted atmosphere,
Like thousands all in one.

Oh dreamer, look to the light!
Doubt not it will come, as cometh the sun,

Brighter, and purer, and more serene,
For the few dark hours that pass between.
Dreamer, look to the light!
They say I am old, that my veins are cold,
That my years are only in thousands told;
And wise men, pondering marks of age,
Foretell the close of my pilgrimage;
But they go down to their silent home,
And I wheel on! Oh, I make no stay
With the shadows of things that have pass'd away,
And I take no thought of the time to come,
But ever and aye, with new delight,
I roll in the flash of the stainless light,
While before and behind, the solemn old night,
Retreating and chasing, is ever in sight;
Dropping the stars, all cold with dew,
As the manna was dropp'd, of old, to the Jew,
Wherever a bird, in love with the sky,

Is looking aloft, as the day goes by,
Or flower asleep, in its shut perfume,
Is waiting the gloom of the night to bloom;
Wherever, instead, were cruel unkindness,
Famine and pestilence, madness and blindness;
Wherever is waiting a hope unblest,
Wherever the dying are sighing for rest;
Thus lingering never,
But ever in motion,
And onward, forever,
With earth and ocean,
With forests, and mountains, and rocks asunder,
With clouds and tempest, with lightning and thunder,
With old broken columns, and ruins laid low,
Temples and pyramids built long ago,
With the numberless dead that are lying below,

"And the living who shortly shall be so,"
I spring forever, with new delight,
Out of the darkness into the light!

Thus said the voice, and at the moment, flew
As might an angel, down the white air through,
And glittering as an angel, or a star,
Swift-wing'd, and flashing to the dark below,
A blue and white rob'd avalanche of snow.
And with no shock or sound, but silently,
Tossing its plumes and wheels of spray, was
lost amid the sea!

Then I arose, and while the morning yet
Linger'd at orient; and not yet had set
The fairest of the lookers-on in heaven;
And piercing through the sharp and pulseless
air,
All round the shoulder'd multitude

Of ancient mountains silent stood;
Silent and hush'd as at an evening hearth,
When all the house are called unto prayer;
Made this my answer to the night-crown'd
earth.

Oh flesh and blood of countless millions! Thou
That art the dust and ashes only of a race,
Born to the venture of uncounted years;
Thou nursery of the universe,
And few days' dwelling-place
Of life, that's deeper than the life of stars,
Whose *Past*, though but the rounding
of a day,
Pierceth the *Onward* of eternity!
A Life that shall outlive the curse
Of Hate, and Vengeance, and the lowermost
Hell!
Of Hate, and Vengeance, and the woe

Unutterable!
Thou sayest well!
Thou sayest well, oh Earth, but canst not speak
The secret that I seek.
God hath not utter'd it;—how canst thou know?
I must look otherwhere than here;
Farther, and higher go!
For not the stars, most dim and ancient, they,
That in the lapse of ages gone, are grey
And hoar with age, that magic word can say;
The secret of man's sin and woe.
God hath not utter'd it;—what star doth know?
But thou, oh sun-bath'd world, roll on!
Thou knowest not the secret which I ask;
Thou knowest not the burden which thou hast;
The crushing, damning weight thou carriest;
Bnt well thou doest thy allotted task,

Low-kneeling, ever, on the flashing rim
Of this thy pathway;—as about God's throne
Worship the Cherubim!

Oh born of beauty perfect as the light,
While yet the day rides with thee,—and the Night,
The wonderful and star-crown'd Night, as now,
Layeth its matchless beauty on thy brow;
And day and night, sweet music make for thee
The mountain-passes and the sounding sea;
And while from out thy nostrils, as a breath,
The lightning playeth beautiful as Death;
And storm and tempest chase thee, like the Day,
About the windings of thy trackless way,—
Roll on—roll on—roll on!

But listen! for the time shall be,
When down the arches of Eternity,
Men shall remember them of thee,
Dimly, and far away, remember thee, as one
Who hadst a little rolling ground in space,
Where wheeling lightly round a central sun,
A few swift thousands thou hadst run,
In that wild race,—
Then suddenly had ceas'd!
So like a pageant of a night,
A darkness, and a borrow'd light,
Shall thy life be!
For it is written, there shall come a day,
When thou as parchment shalt be roll'd away;
And thy bright path in Heaven, nevermore
By man or angel seen;—and nevermore
Shall morning come to thee, or noon,
Or the sweet visitings of night;
The snows of winter, the warm touch of June,

Or last, the golden light
Of Autumn, robing for the lowly grave;
These all, with thy dominion, as a power
And separate glory, which He gave
Who made thee at Creation's hour,
Shall in a moment of thy rounding flash,
Cease;—and thou no more!

And I shall witness it—oh Earth most fair,
Most beautiful,—oh earth most rare!
And God shall make for me another home,
Where in the calm of its eternity
I shall anew begin the life to come!
I shall anew begin the life that evermore
shall be;
For I am of the breath of God, oh Earth,
And live forever!

Thus I replied—and down the mountains came

All calm, and mute, the silver-and-rose-tint
flame
Of the morning! Beautiful!
Beautiful upon the shelving mountain-sides,
And down the chasms, where the white mist
rides;
The white mist, wonderful to see!
Beautiful upon the fountains, and the dim
Outline of Ocean, whence the distant hymn
Rises continually!
Beautiful as is the coming of the Spring;—
As is the dawning of a hope;—
As is the trying of a wing
For Heaven;—when you feel the old world reel
Away below, and see the stars down-spring
To give a welcoming!—
As is the smile of a young child sleeping
Where violets spring!—
Beautiful beyond all picturing!

Wherefore, I pray'd—Oh cleanse me from
all sin,
All doubt and pride, and fear, and strife within,
And make me even as the morning, thus
—Oh God of the sun-light—pure and glorious!

Then all in the stillness of the Dawn,
The little white cloud and I pass'd on!

IV.

Since that bright morn the years, the long
long years,
Have come and gone, and still I travel on;
And still the hopes and fears—
The hopes and fears which cannot severed be,
They travel on with me.
But never have I doubted of that land
Whither I journey—never of that peaceful
shore,
Whither a small white hand,
Evermore,
Beckons me onward from the crowd—
Beckons me from the pilot-cloud.
Likewise, undoubted visions I
Sometimes have of that bright sky,

Lifted from all mortal fear,
I breathe a wondrous atmosphere,
And continually, perpetually,
A glory doth surround me,
In that soft, pure air.
'Tis the light which liveth there!
This with seeming glory crowns me,
Giving peace unto my soul,
Peace, peace, calm rest and peace!
Oh, no doubt, it is that country,
Which the old man told to me;
No night, said he, on land or sea!
No night upon the gleaming land!
No light upon the sapphire sea!

Some say that I am mad; some say
I am as one who walks in sleep,
But whom some angel charge doth keep,

While he goes wandering on his way,
Thinking the night is day:
Goes chasing phantoms on his way,
Mistaking night for day.

I travel on; I tarry not;
My peace, my rest, my home, my lot,
Are cast in a country far away.
I travel on; I tarry not;
But unto all I say,
Lo! we shall meet again one day,
However diverse our travel be,
All meet upon one common shore;
Then who is dreaming, who is mad, shall be
Made clear of mystery forevermore;
Forever, forevermore!

Then shall appear

The foolish and the wise men all;
The madmen and the dreamers all;
Oh! not as here;
But gathered in one vast company;
And the waking, and dreaming, the true and
the seeming,
The sane and the mad—they all shall be
Seen without mystery, on that day.

Oh, tarry not, tarry not, make no delay,
Let us get onward while yet we may,
Away, away, tarry not, tarry not,
For as God *liveth, fast cometh that day.*

But who will preside? (say they to me)
Who will give judgment?
Can any one say?
For all things must be
Adjudged that day in fairness and equity.

Then I reply :—

God will be there!
Christ will be there!
He who hung on the Cross will be there.
He will preside!
He will give judgment!

Oh, tarry not, tarry not, make no delay,
Let us get onward while yet we may,
Away, away, tarry not, tarry not,
For as He *liveth, fast cometh that day!*

V.

Who leads the Night? who hath the
Morning Watch?
Who is it? who? that hath the Morning
Watch?
For swiftly, swiftly, now the Night speeds on!
No guiding hand is seen: no pilot nigh:
No voices on the deep: no chariots upon
The arching firmament, the Night lead on:
No tread of footsteps on the cold grey sky;
The one grand movement, trackless all, and
still:
The helm that guides it is a *Master's will!*

As in the presence of the Living God,
With a deep awe, the traveller look'd abroad

Upon this onward movement of the night;
The far, dim, mountain ranges, and the sea:
Then suddenly, but calmly, thus again spake
he:

My friend, the story of my life is told:
For now I think that I shall see no more
The flashing of the sunlight on the shore;
No more the sunset glory, as of old;
For now a sudden darkness doth enfold
Me, and the light—the pure bright light—
God's light
Is gone! My friend, I see thee not!
But look forth thou, and say how wears the
night:
Look well, and note if there be any change
Eastward the mountains, where the southern
range
Crowds high the climbing sea.

See'st thou the spot? Oh tell me if there be
A bright star standing far apart,
Above the breakers, in that sky;
For by the flush of warmth about my heart,
The morning must be nigh.

Would it were so! Alas! I see no change,
Unless it be that all things look more strange
And vision-like! The air is like a breath,
Which, beating pulse-like, soft and low,
Comes whispering a tale of woe,
And hath the chill of death!
I look abroad upon the whispering air,
Eastward the mountains, and upon the sea,
But see no gleam of morning anywhere,
And in the sky I find no traveller.
But with the same calm step, and free,
Night moves grandly on as ever;
Bringing only in the breeze

The cry of the sea-bird coming landward,
And the dashing of the seas!

No light—no star of the morning yet!
It matters not: for till the sun shall set,
And rise upon the world, to rise no more,
Ever the morning beautiful shall come,
And bring its gladness, like the light of home,
And crown the Heavens with its joy and peace!
Since the last sunset, many a buried year,
Golden with mornings, hath uprisen here,
As from the dead: now, even as the dead,
Let them again be buried.
All things move onward; even now I hear
A murmur as of wings, and voices near;
And pictures pass before me of a country far
away.
Good Night! my friend; I will now rest, and
sleep;

I will go travel in that distant land,
Until the coming of the day;
And if I wake not soon, yet let me sleep!
And if I rise not soon, yet let me stay;
For I love the sunny pictures of that country
far away!
But I would sleep not with the Heavens alight;
Oh look thou upward, in the farthest deep,
Beyond the shadow of the Night:
Is there no light, no glory there?
And list! the music on the air!
Sweet voices, hear you not?

I look, but see no light; and save
The breaking of the long sea-wave,
I hear no music, no sweet voice;
Ah no!
Alas! alas! this night of woe!

Oh God, our hearts are sad and low;
Christ have mercy upon us!

Amen! amen!
Christ have mercy upon us!
But hush, my spirit; do I not see
The mountain-tops, that by the sea,
Look up so calm, and peacefully?
(Oh Angel, leave me not)
And far below,
Doth come and go,
Over the distant hills doth come,
The vision of my own bright home!
And list! I hear the murmur light,
Of the mimic seas, that up to the breeze,
Rise with a tone of deep delight,
And dash their little life away,
In gambols on the sun-lit bay;

(Good Angel, leave me not)
Oh vision of my home, again
As cooling waters to the brain,
Again the everlasting snows,
Lie pure upon the mountain-brows;
While far below the sunbeams flash
On avalanche, and iced parterre,
And a thousand plunging torrents dash
Their spray, and music, on the air!
(My Angel, leave me not)
And again, the light, the voices sweet,
Away, away, oh far away,
Do I not see their flashing feet?
Do I not hear the voices say,
Away, away, oh far away—
"*The night is past, cometh the day.*"
Away, away, oh far away—
"*The night is past, cometh the day!*"
THE DAY! THE DAY! MY ANGEL!

He sleeps! speak to him, and let us see
If he will wake. Ah no! he will not wake.
For, did he not say
He would go travel in a distant land,
Until the coming of the day?
And now 'tis daybreak
All abroad upon the hills, and on the sea,
And yet he rests, how calmly, and wakes not!
He is not pain'd, think you?
He hath no care, no trouble now?
How brave he looks!

I think an angel may look thus in heaven,
He is so grand and beautiful!

My friends, no doubt, this man, this traveller,
Hath now gone onward to a distant shore,
And will return not here.
We need not wait for him;
For while the worlds bowl down the glittering deep,
And the great sun wheels on his bright career,
He will return no more.
But cometh a morning, when from this deep sleep,
Waking, this flesh and blood shall rise again;
And rising, put on immortality!
Oh then, as now, my friend, may thy look tell
Of rest, and peace, and joy unspeakable!
Till then, thou star-companion, rest thee well!
Oh rest, rest, sleep on!

Outline of the Narrative.

Outline of the Narrative.

PART THE FIRST.

I.

The scene is in a tropic land, upon a high bluff overlooking the sea.

The coming of Night is announced.

And a traveller from a distant country asks if the night be very fair.

The voice replies that the night comes silently, and that a small white cloud is seen in the offing, with which the lightning is at play.

Also that the night doth foreshadow to the guilty a long night of terror and dismay.

But to some it promiseth a beautiful morning, in a land where is no care or weariness, or any sorrow; for it is the Infinite God who ruleth both day and night.

Then the Traveller replies that this is doubtless that country to which he is journeying.

But moved thereto by a sudden and mysterious impulse, he calls upon God to stay the night.

But the night travels on.

Then the traveller comforteth himself that the stars —and the gentle wind, which now, after the first chill of the evening, is warm and pleasant again,—will go with him on his long journey.

But suddenly his limbs fail him, and he, perforce, must tarry there for the night. And as the spirit of prophecy doth sometimes come to those who are about to depart hence, so now it seemeth to him his hour is approaching.

Pointing to the stars, he showeth the stranger how securely we sail among them, for God keepeth them, each in his allotted place, so that no harm cometh to any.

But, nevertheless, there is pain, and weariness, and infinite distress under these beautiful skies, as do know even the brute things of the earth.

Then the traveller proposeth to the stranger that he will recount to him the history of his life.

II.

He begins with a description of his native country and his early home—a pleasant land.

And the dwellers therein lived happily, wondering much and cheerfully how all things were so fair and good.

Then came a messenger to them, saying that all this visible world is not eternal, but was created in old time by *One who* still careth for it, and giveth it constantly life and motion.

Then behold appeared upon all things a beauty and glory greater than all other before, and they became a language which told them constantly of that *Great Being*. So that in all time they seemed to be walking in *His presence*—the presence of the *Most High—the Wonderful—the Almighty—the Ancient of Days.*

And the morning and the evening seemed like the going and coming of *His* angels.

A mother prayeth for her child.

And often at even-tide she sings a song of a beautiful country, far away, where is no night.

But as the knowledge of evil tempts one to know and be familiar with it, so now, other agencies—evil agencies,—were about him, for whom that daily prayer was offered, meeting him in all things and in all places.

Veiling their own wretchedness and woe, they put on the guise of sadness and a touching melancholy,

alternating with an unnatural life and vivacity; and at last they lead him away.

But before he leaves the boundaries of his home, he pauses for one last look, and behold, one looking like an angel is kneeling on the margin of the sea, motionless and speechless, looking calmly up into the blue heavens. But as one gone mad, he turns suddenly, and the world and the dark night receive him to their arms.

III.

The traveller enters the world of action and trial—the crowded streets where the living and the dead pass silently, and no one saith, "Good Morrow," or "How is it with thee?" for the dead, observe, are of no account.

He descants upon the evils of the world, and hath a vision of a great battle on the plains of Hungary.

The traveller apostrophizes the world, likening it to the ancient Nineveh, which lieth all mute and still under the sands of the desert.

And above this great city, now under the sands, other generations come up and build their tombs, and

lay them down to their last sleep; and again the sands drift about the walls, and while the blue heaven arches above them, they all slumber on together.

But the time shall come when this great city and the great world itself shall stand in the presence of the *Most High*, and as the beautiful paintings in buried Nineveh do fade at the first touch of the light and the air, so at the breath of God the glory of this world passeth away and is seen no more.

The traveller returns to the account of his life, which now had become evil continually. Living, therefore, not in unison and harmony with nature, all the visible world gradually changed to him, and became, as it were, dark and threatening.

IV.

On a bright morning in the autumn-time, the traveller goeth into the fields, seeking a holiday; and there appear to him visions of his better days.

Old faces come crowding about him, old songs are sung again, old prayers are uttered, half unconsciously, until he hears some one say "Amen."

And walking down the lawn, with the mountain-

brook which discourseth incessantly with him, he enters an ancient wood; and nowhere does he find the disturbing elements which make up the strife and contest of the great world, but all is calmness and self-possession, and a speaking, or silent joy.

He considereth the beauty of the tree: which having no thoughts to do other than the will of God, silently executes it; and for the beautiful light and the showers, and the night dew and the pleasant air, it returns all which it hath, and which they have made—its flowers and fruit. This is its thanksgiving.

Again appeareth to the traveller other visions: and pictures of his past life, with a sad music, pass before him. He reflects that these pictures, though faded, will one day be revived and their color made permanent; and he discovers how discordant is all that life with the beauty and harmony of the external world.

And he returns to his home in the mountain valley.

But his home was desolate; the mother's prayer had been answered.

As a year before he had looked down upon that country, almost in madness in the sight, so now appeared to him again, but in vision only, the robes of

white, the pale lips, the folded hands, and the up-raised eyes, looking into the still heaven.

Then a great sadness falls upon him.

He lieth by the sea-side, and in sleep see'th a strange world, which, though it sailed among others that were very fair and beautiful, was itself, and of its own choice, as it were, an outcast among them.

He looks upon the inhabitants of that world, and their silent wretchedness, which is very terrible.

V.

The traveller wakes from sleep on the shore of the sea, and finds himself again in a world of life and action.

But now it is no more a world of joy and beauty. Almost as one gone mad, he wanders about the land.

But he remembers unconsciously how all things seemed to him in his early days. He knoweth that Nature is kinder than man, and, with a kind of instinct, he stays among the mountains and by the sea.

With the spirit of a little child, he listens to what they say, for they are seldom silent, and if silent, it seems like the silence of prayer.

Suddenly he imagines that all this beautiful worship is for him, and for a little while he rests, and is at peace with all things.

Elate with his new-born happiness, he saith unto his soul, "We will sin no more."

The traveller goes back in memory to that morning. He apostrophizes his home, and lives again in imagination through the long night of fear and dismay.

With a mingled yearning and horror for his past sins, which still crowd about him in the silent night-watches, he barreth out the stars, for they are cold and pure, and have no sympathy with evil. But in the morning-watch these spirits depart, and there enters the Presence of One long since departed. The traveller knoweth then that angels are about him, and he sinks to rest. He saith, now I will dream of the happy land.

Interlude.

While the traveller discourseth of his life, the night steals on. There are a few stars yet in heaven, and the little cloud is still there, but is looking light and ethereal. It is now the mid-watch of the night. I doubt if the little cloud will be seen much longer; it is rising higher and higher. Already the stars gleam through it. Before the morning, doubtless, it will have gone.

And now if there be here any spirit of ill, let it depart hence. There is a place for such, but it is not here.

PART THE SECOND.

I.

The traveller returns again to the life-narrative.

Telling of an old man who lived in the mountains, who describes to him a wonderful country far away in the west.

There is no night there, but always the day; always the morning! so that the beautiful light stayeth and dwelleth perpetually with all things.

And he sitteth all the long night under the open heavens, thinking of that country.

And now he remembers the song, sung so often in the olden time by One now departed, which told of this same country, the far away country, the beautiful country over the sea.

The traveller resolves that he will set forth in search of it.

The morning comes.

And a little cloud sails out upon the sky, and goes on slowly towards the west.

The traveller leaves his home, and where the little cloud stood poised over an upland range, he says to that land his last good bye.

II.

He now enters the wilderness.

And at mid-day reaches a high mountain pass.

And looking down on the country which he had left, behold the little cloud was not there, but was poised as before overhead.

It was wonderful; for there was no breath of air in the sky, and no other cloud.

The traveller doubteth if it be a cloud or a vision only.

And with a prophecy which proves true, he guesseth that the cloud may be going with him on his journey.

And it was even so.

Then the traveller buildeth an altar between the mountains, and rests for the day.

But at nightfall he continues his journey, when, behold a bright path opens before him, where are the prints of innumerable feet—the feet, as he imagines, of those who have gone before: no doubt, in search of the same country.

The traveller discourseth upon the *way* which is given to all, the path in which we must walk, and that life and death are matters of choice to all beings, death consisting chiefly in being left to one's self, abandoned of God, in whom all things that live have life.

III.

In the course of his long journey, the traveller pauses one morning before day-break, and looks abroad upon a wide range of sea and land.

And he discourseth with the earth.

The earth replies, but vaguely.

Then looking forward to the time when the earth must pass away, the traveller declares that God will build another home for him, where will begin the life immortal.

Then comes the morning, and praying that he may be made pure, like the light, the traveller and the bright morning travel on together.

IV.

And now many years have gone since that bright

morning, but still he travels on, not doubting of the country to which he journeys.

For the little cloud is with him always.

And often he has visions of that land which the old man told to him—the "far away country, the beautiful country, where is no night, on land or sea."

Some say that he is mad; some say that he is a dreamer; but whom some angel guards from all harm.

But he travels on; saying to all, that we shall meet again, and then will appear who are the madmen and the dreamers.

V.

It is now the morning watch, and the traveller, having concluded the story of his life and journey, asks the stranger to look forth again, and see if there be any sign of morning, for a sudden darkness surrounds him, and he surmiseth that his hour of departure is at hand.

The stranger replies that the night is still moving on grandly as ever, and nowhere is any gleam of morning.

The traveller cheereth and comforteth the stranger, that the morning, the beautiful morning, will surely come: it will not fail.

But whether, as by the coming of death, or by the solemn stillness of the night, and the strange history of this strange man—the stranger is appalled and overpowered with the awfulness of the scene.

But now an angel taketh the traveller away to his early home, and there, in vision, he seeth again the mountains, and the sea, and the beautiful home underneath the hills.

And he heareth voices which call to him, and which say, "the night is past, cometh the day"—far away, far away, they call to him, "the night is past, cometh the day."

"The day! the day!" Ah, without doubt, the long, long journey is now nearly over; one step more, and now the traveller is entering that wonderful country, the beautiful country, the far away country, "where is no night, on land or sea!"

Will the traveller return? shall we see him again?

At some distant day he may return; but now we need not stay—it is irrevocable: he is gone. But in that country where he now dwells we may see the traveller again. *Oh be strong, be strong: fear not.*

THE END.

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